GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3075
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2001
SC/ST WELFARE PROGRAMMES
NANDIPAKU VENKATASWAMY;SUKENDER REDDY GUTHA

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the report of the Committee of the Governors headed by Shri P.C.Alexander on the progress of SC/STs welfare programme has been submitted to the Government;

(b) if so, the suggestions made by the Committee on various welfare schemes; and

(c) the follow up action taken by the Government on their recommendations?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA)

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) Gist of recommendations made by the Committee is enclosed in Annexure.

(c) Relevant extracts of the report has been sent to the State Governments/UTAdministrations and the concerned Ministries/Departments of CentralGovernment for appropriate action. The Planning Commission has also beenrequested for taking necessary action.

ANNEXURE

GIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE OF GOVERNORS

1. General Recommendations

(i) In all programmes and schemes for the welfare for the Scheduled Castesand Scheduled Tribes, greater thrust should be accorded to benefit the poorest of the poor among these categories to bring them above the poverty line.

(ii) The schemes under different sectors which have direct relevance to the development of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Trines should be taken up on priority.

(iii) While devising schemes for the welfare for the Scheduled Castes,focus should be on family oriented schemes and in case of schemes for the Scheduled Tribes the focus should be on community oriented schemes.

(iv) A massive awareness programmes should be taken up by the Government with the involvement of NGOs to make the beneficiaries aware of the schemes formulated for their welfare.

(v) The officers and functionaries involved in the implementation of the programmes should be sensitized to the special problems of these categories through periodical orientation programmes.

(vi) In view of the large amount of funds being allocated and spent for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes officers with adequate seniority, experience and aptitude in the States should be posted as Secretaries of the Social Welfare/Tribal Welfare Departments.

2. Land Distribution

A scheme for providing land to the SC/ST landless and marginal farmers in the rural areas should be framed which would not only help in the economic empowerment of these categories but would also give them a status in the social hierarchy at the village level. The scheme can be introduced from the First Year of the next Five Year Plan and be implemented over a period of three successive Five Year Plans covering a large number of beneficiaries. The following sources can be tapped for making land available for these categories:

Distribution of Surplus Land and Bhoodan Land

(a) Top priority should be given to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes families in the allotment of ceiling surplus land and Bhoodan Land. The States should prepare an action plan and undertake a special drive for distribution of surplus and Bhoodan lands free from all encumbrances to the eligible SC/ST families in a time bound programme.

(b) Degraded Wastelands

A systematic effort should be made to tap this available resource and allot land on priority to the eligible SC/ST families in the rural areas. These lands can then be made productive by providing an irrigation package and agriculture inputs.

(c) Distribution of degraded forest lands

The Committee therefore strongly recommends that the villages and tribal communities living inside and on the periphery of forests should be given inalienable rights for taking up forest related activities on these lands as per the Working Plan approved by the Forest Department.

(d) Purchase of Land

Government should step in to purchase land for allotting it to the eligible SC/ST families. In the land purchase scheme the major share will have to be borne by the Central Government over and above the allocations made by it under the Special Central Assistance.

The Scheme can be implemented through the State Financial Corporations for the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and a project based approach should be adopted.

An adequate package of inputs like irrigation through open wells or bore wells with provision for electricity/diesel for pump sets should also be built into the package for better results especially in case of dry lands.

(e) Other land related recommendations

(i) A National Policy for project affected persons who are displaced on account of irrigation and other projects should be framed to ensure that immediate compensatory land can be made available to them.

(ii) The States should strictly enforce the Acts for Prevention of Alienation of lands belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes so that these categories can be given repossession of their alienated lands.

(iii) A centrally funded time bound programme for the survey and settlement of lands in tribal areas in the North East should be taken up on priority.

There should be a uniform policy of exploitation of minor forest produce (MFD) and non-timber forest produce (NTFP).

3. Education

(i) The Education Budget of the State should be used for ensuring compulsory primary education to all the children belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes along with the children of the general population as this is the policy laid down in the Constitution of India under Article 45 which says that the State shall endeavour to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14.

(ii) The SCP/TSP funds should be used exclusively for schemes which directly benefit the children form the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes categories.

(iii) The rates of scholarships should be scaled up considerably .

(iv) The education department should identify intelligent and talented children from poor Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe families and give them scholarships to the highest level.

(v) A large number of Hostels and Ashram Shalas with adequate teachers and staff should be opened for them and the entire expenditure on their education, boarding and lodging should be borne by the Government.

(vi) Higher incentives should be given to girl students or their parents for ensuring attendance.

(vii) The introduction of a scheme on the lines of the Education Guarantee Scheme of Madhya Pradesh in all the States which will ensure some education where there is no education.

(viii) A Revolving Fund for Scholarships at the District/State level should be set up.

(ix) The continuance of special coaching schemes for SC/ST candidates.

(x) Technical institutes should be set up to impart training to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe youth to equip them for middle level technical jobs in industry and services.

(xi) The reservation percentage for seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students are strictly adhered to in professional and technical institutions.

4. HOUSING

(i) The special focus should be given to allot houses on priority in a time bound programme to all the remaining houseless SC/ST families.

(ii) More priority in the allocation of funds under this Yojana should be given to the houseless SC/ST families.

(iii) The State Governments should also make allocations from the Special Component Plan for providing houses in addition to the houses under the Indira Awas Yojna .

(iv) The scheme of allotting housing sites should be further strengthened.

5. Public Health

Introduction of a scheme on the lines of the Jan Swasthya Rakshak scheme of Madhya Pradesh which is designed on the lines of the bare foot doctor scheme.

6. Entrepreneurship Development Programmes
The educated youth from the SC/ST families should be trained with adequate skills and knowledge in modern methods of business and services and provided the motivation for taking up new enterprises.

7. Other Programmes

(i) Setting up Self Help Groups especially amongst the women to empower them and to encourage them .

(ii) Introducing a Grain Bank Scheme for the Tribal areas.

(iii) Those engaged in traditional trades should be encouraged to take up modern trades .
(iv) Introduction of schemes for unemployed SC/ST youth.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS ON SPECIAL COMPONENT PLAN/TRIBAL SUB PLAN

(i) The Social Welfare Department and the Tribal Welfare Department in the States should be designated as Nodal Departments

(ii) Social Welfare Departments and the Tribal Welfare Departments at the National and State level should be made accountable for implementation and should be strengthened .

(iii) The Social Welfare Department and the Tribal Welfare Department at the State level should be entrusted with the responsibility to take all policy decisions .

(iv) The SCP/TSP component of all Ministries/Departments should be pooled and given to the Social Welfare Department/Tribal Welfare Department for further utilization.

(v) No Central Ministry or State Government should e allowed to make lesser allocation and release of funds than what is essential on the basis of the required percentage.

(vi) Approval to schemes and projects should be done at the State level. The Central Ministries should give general guidelines and list out the eligible schemes. Block Grants and the United Funds ideas should be given serious consideration in which fund should be allotted to the States by the Central Ministries based on population percentage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the respective States with full autonomy to the State Gov ernments to take up schemes for the welfare of these categories.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES (PREVENTION OF ATROCITIES) AC 1989 AND THE PROTECTION OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACT, 1955

Investigation of offences should be conducted by the officer in charge of Police Station , charge sheet should be presented n the Court within 4 months, Special Courts in each district but one Special Court can be set up for 3 to 4 districts keeping in view the instances of

atrocities in these districts and the pendency of cases and neglect of duty under Section 4 of the Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989 should be withdrawn. Necessary amendment should be made in SC/ST (Prevention ofAtrocities) Act, 1989 and the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1995.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS ON CASTE CERTIFICATES

Bogus people must be prevented by effective means to protect the interests of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STATES IN THE NORTH EAST

The Centrally Sponsored Schemes in respect of the North Eastern States should be100% funded by the Central Government. There is a need to create awareness amongst the large number of genuine NGOs and to encourage them to take up welfare projectsfor the SCs and STs. A review of the Forest Conservation Act 1980 so that the tribalswho are staying in forests and on the periphery for generations can carry out forest related activities. Introduction of Special Centrally funded Programmes to ensure totalconnectivity of villages in the North East. A complete survey and settlement of land in the tribals areas should be completed within a fixed time frame. The Intellectual Property Rights regime should be strictly introduced and implemented in these areas. The need for proper study of the traditionala system of Local Government in the TribalStates/areas of the North East and to include them into the Constitutional-legal framework.